

When Sergeant Stoe walked back from the reviewing stand, the tears were still in his eyes. He shook the hand of every cadet and every sponsor, about one hundred-fifty in all, and when he finished his only words were, "You guys sure put on a hell of a show."

Karlis E. Rusa

THOUGHT-SHIPS

a prose poem

Often it is that strange and beautiful ships are seen to put in at a certain vast port; they are bright argosies that come gliding from the unseen horizon on days which are as songs of azure and gold. The sea then is of lavender, and reflects the mellow skies where burns the never-consumed sun. And the argosies have sails for the most part dazzling white, or of varied joyous colors, and perhaps some that are as the raiment of Harlequin. And on these merry ships are borne ancient chests of spices from sunken worlds, and thousand-faceted gems whose brilliance makes men laugh in glee, and unknown instruments that can play rare music, music arousing suppressed feelings in those who hear. But ever and anon, when the port sleeps a heavy and drugged sleep in the sultry glare of day, the argosies of mirth enter it in vain; for then there is no one on the wharves to unload the graceful vessels, and they must depart the way they came.

And there are times when other ships come roaring swiftly and ominously from the unseen horizon, and they come unbidden on nights that are stormy and wild. Blackly monstrous and ungainly are these ships, and their dark sails, whipping and fluttering in ghastly winds, are tattered and ragged. Like fierce dragons, the demonic vessels are swept over the wharves by the shrieking storm, and rage high above the cowering city ere they plunge downward to wreak ruin and woe. Then they vanish, as ghosts, but leave horror in their wake.

For the vast are rick and sereve; and the grim eldritch ships are my thoughts that port is my mind, and the graceful argosies are my thoughts that bring grief and fear to me, and I would gladly reject them. . . .